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REMARKS

Claims 1-48 are currently pending. As a result of the above amendment, Claims 1, 15, 23, 40, and 48 have been amended, and Claims 8, 22, 30-39 and 41 have been canceled. Therefore, Claims 1-7, 9-21, 23-29, 40, 42-48 are at issue in this Application.

Examiner Interview

On May 5, 2005, Applicants' counsel and Examiner Derrick Boles conducted a telephone interview regarding the present Application. During the interview, the parties discussed the pending independent claims, proposed amendments, allowable subject matter and the Lyman and Koike references.

Allowable Subject Matter & Amended Claims

On page 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner indicates that dependent Claims 8, 22, 30 and 41 are allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all intervening limitations. Independent Claim 1 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter of Claim 8; independent Claim 15 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter of Claim 22; independent Claim 23 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter of Claim 30; independent Claim 40 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter of Claim 41; and, independent Claim 48 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter.

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CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe that claims 1-7, 9-21, 23-29, 40, 42-48 are in condition for allowance, and respectfully request early notice of the same. Applicants request that the Examiner call the undersigned attorney with any questions concerning this Reply, or if it will expedite the progress of this Application.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: May 24, 2005

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CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that this document is being facsimile transmitted to the Patent and Trademark Office, to the attention of Examiner Derek Boles, Art Unit No. 3749, to Fax No. 703/872-9306 on May 24, 2005.

Gillian Gardner
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